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# THE AMERICAN MAGAZINE OF ART

AN ILLUSTRATED MONTHLY MAGAZINE

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## AN OPEN LETTER

NEW YORK, June, 1916.

TO THE EDITOR

THE AMERICAN MAGAZINE OF ART:

I am very glad to have the opportunity to tell the readers of THE AMERICAN MAGAZINE OF ART something about the progress of the Relief Fund of the American Artists' Committee of One Hundred for the Families of French Soldier-Artists. We organized this Committee in September, 1914, and I think it may have been the first to send over funds to France, for we cabled our first remittance, \$1,500.00, to M. León Bonnat, President of the Fraternité des Artistes, on October 14th. From October, 1914, to July 1, 1915, we remitted, from our general fund, obtained by contributions from members of our Committee, other artists and friends of art and France, \$5,500.00; and from the proceeds of the exhibition we held at the Knoedler Galleries in February, 1915, \$11,575.00; making \$17,075.00 in all. Since last July we have sent over \$3,600.00, so that our total to date is \$20,675.00. By reason of the high rate of exchange this sum has made some 120,000 francs, as we paid through the Crédit Lyonnais in Paris. The Fifth Avenue Bank, New York, is the custodian of our funds and our remitting agency.

The great multitude of appeals, made for many forms of relief work this past winter and spring has seemed to make it increasingly difficult to obtain contributions by means of circular letters and has prevented us from equalling our fine record of last year. Next winter we think we may be justified in organizing another exhibition, though calls on the artists have been numerous for various enterprises, the latest of which was the Allied Bazaar, the proceeds from this undertaking being given to the great works of aid for the wounded soldiers and the destitute people of the allied nations. We hope, for our part, to continue in our own field in the most substantial degree possible, our help through the efficient and wide reaching

organization of the Fraternité des Artistes, to the women and children, dependents of the artist soldiers at the front and of those who have, alas! been killed in battle. Many fine young lives in the budding of their talent and others in its full flower, have been lost; other artist soldiers have been maimed for life or blinded. Think of a painter, a sculptor or an architect whose arms are cut off or one of whose eyes are gone forever!

Whatever the calamities and whatever the conditions of want and suffering we know that the money we send is most efficiently used by the Committee of the Fraternité and applied where the need is greatest. This Committee, headed by M. León Bonnat, whose devotion in the present crisis is admired throughout all France, comprises the most prominent artists, among them M. Antonen Mercié, president of La Société des Artistes Français, and M. Alfred Roll, president of the Société Nationale des Beaux-Arts, and it is a working, not an honorary, committee. They have done and are doing much, by their own efforts and resources, though the latter are restricted by the stand-still caused by the war, to help their confrères and their families. They have shown us by every means in their power and by many beautiful and heartfelt expressions of gratitude their appreciation of our work and of the support of our friends. Our sympathy and our material aid, perhaps, I may say, the way we have conveyed this aid to them, honoring ourselves in doing so, have comforted them and have drawn to us, in sympathetic relations, a far wider circle than the art world of Paris. Art may have no nationality, as has often been said, but the American artists and those of France, always closely interdependent before the war, have, since its outbreak, been united by a stronger bond, one of friendship and brotherhood, that I am sure will endure through coming generations.

Some time ago I wrote to M. Bonnat and asked for some information with regard to the outlook for the Fraternité's financial resources. They had never given us so much as a hint as to how pressing their needs might be, sending only more and more thanks and tokens of gratitude. M. Bonnat tells me that up to April the Fraternité had distributed nearly 500,000 francs and adds: "Et la guerre, hélas, n'est pas terminée." "Que de ressources il nous faudrait encore trouver pour tenir jusqu'au bout." By "jusqu'au bout" he does not mean "until the end of the war," for extreme want is bound to continue long after it is over. However, this is all he says himself as to their needs, but he had M. Edouard Thourny, the Secretary of the Fraternité, write me, and from his letter we learn that they have 2,500 people on their relief rolls, that the maximum amount given to any individual is 1fr. 25c. (less than 25 cents) a day, and they were distributing some 1,100 francs per day in assistance. From their own resources and subscriptions they were looking forward to receiving through the year some 50,000 francs, but the sum remaining in the treasury and the money expected did not, I see, make a very promising outlook. Since April, however, through the efforts of the Committee of American Architects, of which Mr. Lloyd Warren is Chairman, a substantial sum has been raised and it may be

deduced from all the facts before us that the Fraternité can meet for a while longer the pressing calls upon it for help. During the summer—"la belle saison"—writes M. Thourny, they hope to reduce the distribution in some directions, but it must appear to us here, in this prosperous country, that a reduction on the small stipend named would leave very little, and many evidently do not receive the maximum; doubtless, too, it may be necessary to discontinue any stipend in some cases altogether.

It is in view of this situation that I feel we may say again address an appeal to all those who are in sympathy with the cause. We send to M. Bonnat, for the records of the Fraternité, the names of all who contribute to our fund. We published a report of our receipts and our expenditures the first of June last year, and before we prepare a second report we should like to see the receipt side of our ledger show much larger figures, permitting us, if possible, to send over \$1,000.00 on the 4th of July, as we did last year, and, at least, two or three times that much before the return of cold weather. Then next year we shall hope to make some sort of a big effort again, as with the exhibition in 1915, and obtain thereby a sum commensurate with the amount of our sympathy and good will. The Fraternité des Artistes, is at the head of artist relief work in France and has under its protecting wing various cooperating, or subsidiary, organizations all doing good work in their respective fields. Every franc it controls is judiciously placed where it is most needed. Cheques for our fund should be drawn to the order of William Bailey Faxon, Treasurer, and may be mailed to him at 215 West Fifty-seventh Street, New York, or to the undersigned at 58 West Fifty-seventh Street. Receipts are sent in acknowledgment of all contributions. Artist contributors who have studied in Paris or worked in France are requested to give the names of their masters or the classes they attended, as we append this data to names on our lists of contributors.

With many thanks for your courtesy, believe me,

Very truly yours,

WILLIAM A. COFFIN, N.A.  
Chairman, American Artists'  
Committee of One Hundred.

## NOTES

ART IN  
PHILADELPHIA  
Americanization through Art, as illustrated at the recent exhibition held in Memorial Hall, Fairmount Park, Philadelphia, is once more brought to the attention of the public observant of the trend of aesthetic endeavor among the various kinds of Americans of foreign extraction. In the Eighteenth Annual Exhibition of the Graphic Sketch Club sixty-nine works in oil, water color and chalks, and thirty-eight pieces of sculpture in bronze, plaster

and clay were exhibited, most of them produced by artists quite well known in our leading picture shows and all having received their professional training in the schools connected with the club. The sculptors whose names appear in the catalogue are mainly of Italian origin, a fact suggestive somewhat of inherited preference for that phase of art. Aurelius Renzetti contributed a very real looking portrait bust of Mr. Harvey M. Watts, art critic of the *Public Ledger*. Pietro Ciavarra had for his sitter the portrait painter, Mr. Leopold Seyffert. A very effective composition entitled "The Stone Carver," by Luigi Maraffi showed some well modeled anatomical detail in arm and torso. A spirited design for a fountain, in which Neptune figures as "The Musician of the Sea," is by Albin Polasek, the winner of an American Prix de Rome and of the Widener Memorial Medal at the Pennsylvania Academy Exhibition of 1915. A number of well executed portraits in oil were shown by the painters, among them, in the position of honor in the main gallery, that of Samuel B. Fleisher, Esq., the founder of the Club, by Lazar Raditz; of Miss Helen Fleisher by Joseph Sacks. Cesare Ricciardi contributed capital work in both portraiture and landscape art, as did also H. A. Pinkovitz. Benjamin Kelman's study of "Swans" was an unusual note in the display and quite satisfactory as a picture. Luigi Spizzirri exhibited studies and portraits in pastel that showed great talent in delineation of character in the medium he employed. The work of the students of the life modelling and commercial design classes was shown in the upper rooms of the Club House, and the who leexhibition remained open until June 11th.

Dr. Ralph Adams Cram, one of the contributing editors of THE AMERICAN MAGAZINE OF ART, in his address entitled "The Dawn of a New Day for Art" at the commencement exercises of the Pennsylvania Museum and School of Industrial Art on May 25th, laid the blame for the decline of contemporary art in America, in painting, music and the drama upon the "crazy notions of the futurists, Straus's compositions and movies and Broadway plays." Forty-nine pupils were graduated from the